



Security Council

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Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

Note verbale dated 7 November 2005 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and, further to its note dated 29 September 2005, has the honour to enclose herewith the updated national report of the Syrian Arab Republic on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) (see annex).

Annex to the note verbale dated 7 November 2005 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

[Original: Arabic]

Amended national report* of the Syrian Arab Republic submitted pursuant to the comments of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) (Note No. S/AC.44/2005/DDA/OC.8 dated 15 June 2005)

Opinion of the Syrian Arab Republic on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

1. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic views Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as a step in the right direction towards **preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and** safeguarding international peace and security. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its commitment to the international resolutions and instruments and the legislation and procedures in force for exchanging information and ensuring coordination of activities undertaken at all levels, whether national, subregional, regional or international, to deal with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

2. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has vested the Department of International Organizations and Conferences of the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with responsibility for implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), in coordination with all the national authorities concerned in the Syrian Arab Republic, and the required national report has been prepared accordingly.

3. The Syrian Arab Republic is a State that neither possesses nor intends to acquire weapons of mass destruction, **their means of delivery, or related materials, as Syria has made clear in a number of general statements presented to the United Nations, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, and the First Committee of the General Assembly in New York, which deals with disarmament issues.**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement

4. **The Syrian Arab Republic has been a member State of the IAEA since 1963.**

5. **The Syrian Arab Republic signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA on 25 February 1992. The agreement was ratified by Act No. 5 of 2 April 1992.**

* New paragraphs are in boldface italic. The remaining paragraphs are the same as those contained in the first national report.

6. The Syrian Arab Republic was one of the first countries to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which it joined on 24 September 1968 and ratified by Legislative Decree No. 169 of 5 August 1969. Syria's accession to the Treaty stemmed from its desire to ensure transparency in this area and its conviction that the possession of such destructive weapons by any State in the Middle East or their falling into the hands of some States and not others or of terrorist non-governmental bodies represented an enormous threat and source of anxiety to the peoples of the region and the world. Indeed, Syria considers the NPT as the indispensable basis for continuing disarmament. The fact that the NPT has a larger number of States parties than any other treaty on the subject simply stems from the belief of the States parties concerned in the importance of the NPT in averting the spectre of nuclear war. To demonstrate its good will, and in the interests of transparency, as early as 1992, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA, establishing a national system to account for, and monitor the movement of, nuclear materials.

7. The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to establish a specific mechanism to address concerns over the prevailing situation in the Middle East. The Syrian Arab Republic remains of the view that intensive efforts must be made to establish and implement such a mechanism, in order to draw the international community's attention to the fact that Israel is the only country in the region that possesses a nuclear military arsenal and refuses to accede to the NPT and to subject all its installations to international inspection under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system. Indeed, the fact that its installations are not subject to any form of international monitoring threatens the region with an environmental disaster owing to potential radiation leaks, as in the case of the Dimona reactor. According to the Israeli media and Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear expert, cracks in the Dimona reactor could lead to deadly radiation leaks. The fact that the competent Israeli authorities have recently distributed iodine pills to residents living in a radius of 30 kilometres from the Dimona reactor and to hotels overlooking the shores of the Dead Sea confirms that this danger exists.

8. The Syrian Arab Republic does not possess any nuclear weapons, their means of delivery, or related materials.

9. The Syrian Arab Republic does not provide assistance to any party whatsoever for the purpose of carrying out any activities relating to the subject mentioned in paragraph 8 above.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic has a national oversight body charged with regulating the handling of radiation sources. Syria uses some radioactive and nuclear materials for a variety of peaceful applications, in fields such as medicine, manufacturing, agriculture, and scientific research. Syria only has low-power research reactors, which are subject to international monitoring under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement reached with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1992, as well as to national oversight under national legislation, and which are used for neutron activation analysis.

11. Legislative Decree No. 64 on radiological protection and the security and safety of radiation sources which are used for peaceful purposes in a variety of

fields such as medicine, manufacturing, agriculture, and scientific research, was issued on 3 August 2005.

12. This Legislative Decree gives the national oversight body wide powers. It stresses the need for continued monitoring of any handling of radioactive or nuclear materials, including the design, manufacture, assembly, import, export, delivery, receipt, lending, borrowing, lease, rental, sale, purchase, distribution, ownership, transfer, operation, use, maintenance, repair, disassembling, shutdown, storage, disposal, or any other form of processing of radiation sources. The Decree calls for monitoring of all of the following: any transport or disposal of radiation sources or radioactive waste; the establishment, operation, ownership, maintenance, modification, or shutdown, of any installation or any part or phase thereof, or the undertaking of any activities, investment or research in any way relating to an installation; the licensing of any such activities; and the imposition of penalties on violators of the provisions of the Decree or of any other national legislation on this subject.

13. The provisions of this Legislative Decree are consistent with international requirements, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) which concerns the need for national legislation to regulate the handling of such materials. This legislation was adopted in the context of national efforts to reinforce the safety and security of radiation sources, prevent damage to health and the environment, and prohibit illegal trafficking in such sources. It establishes rules and restrictions and lays down strict penalties for anyone who violates them. There are also provisions on responding to radiological emergencies.

14. This legislation tasks the competent government agency with the conduct of all inspections of installations and locations where radiation sources are housed or used, and the responsibility for disseminating a culture of prevention, safety and security among the public at large.

Border surveillance

15. In 1987, the Syrian Arab Republic, desiring to combat illegal trafficking in radioactive substances, established specialized border stations at all its land, sea and air entry/exit points to monitor movements of nuclear and radioactive materials in accordance with national rules, legislation and regulations that have the force of law and comply with IAEA international norms and regulations relating, in particular, to the reporting, registration, licensing and monitoring of all radioactive and nuclear materials and equipment used for peaceful purposes that enters and exits the Syrian Arab Republic.

16. The Syrian Arab Republic applies strict laws and domestic legislation on monitoring of all prohibited or restricted materials coming into Syria via air, land and sea ports of entry, including, for example:

- Legislative Decree No. 13 of 1974, on the prohibition of smuggling;
- The Customs Act No. 9 of 1975;
- Legislative Decree No. 59 of 2003, on combating money-laundering; and
- Legislative Decree No. 33 of 2005, on combating money-laundering and terrorism-financing.

Obligations towards IAEA

17. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic adheres scrupulously to all its international commitments and agreements on the relevant subjects and is moving forward on the development and enhancement of its national monitoring and regulation programmes.

18. **The Syrian Arab Republic has committed itself to a number of international instruments adopted under the auspices of IAEA, such as:**

- **The Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (signed on 2 July 1987);**
- **The Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (signed on 2 July 1987);**
- **The Convention on Nuclear Safety (signed on 23 September 1994); and**
- **The IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources (by a note dated 24 February 2004 addressed to the Director-General of IAEA.**

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

19. *The Syrian Arab Republic is not a party to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, because it has no nuclear material with the exception of that mentioned in paragraph 10 of this report. On the basis of Legislative Decree No. 64 of 2005, the Syrian Arab Republic issued rules, regulations and guidelines prohibiting all the actions mentioned in paragraphs 11 and 12 of this report; indeed, Syria imposes harsh penalties on violators of the Decree. It should be noted that, on 1 July 1964, the Syrian Arab Republic joined the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water.*

A region free of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons

20. **Since 1994, the Syrian Arab Republic has contributed effectively to the Arab Committee established under the auspices of the League of Arab States to prepare a draft convention on ridding the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.**

21. As a follow-up to initiatives which the Syrian Arab Republic has presented to the international community in order to strengthen and promote international peace and security, in April 2003, Syria submitted to the Security Council, in New York, on behalf of the Arab Group, an initiative aimed at ridding the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. Syria declared before the international community that it, together with its Arab brothers and the world's other peace-loving countries, would actively contribute to making the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, however, international conditions at the time and the positions taken by certain influential States in the Security Council did not favour the success of that initiative. In December 2003, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted the same initiative to the Security Council, but was threatened with a veto. The proposal remained before the Security Council "in blue" awaiting more favourable international conditions for its adoption.

Nuclear terrorism

22. The Syrian Arab Republic and all the Arab States have been parties to the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism since 1998. The Syrian Arab Republic is also a party to the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on the Suppression of Terrorist Acts, which was adopted by the OIC foreign ministers in 1999. In March 2005, furthermore, the Syrian Arab Republic acceded to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. Accession was effected pursuant to Act No. 5 of 2005, in which Syria made a reservation to article 2, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention, since the Syrian Arab Republic does not regard legitimate acts of resistance to foreign occupation as acts of terrorism.

23. In September 2005, the Syrian Arab Republic signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, in connection with the signing of the International Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. The Syrian Arab Republic was one of the first States which, since 1985, had been calling upon the international community to convene an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to discuss the subject of terrorism and define what is meant by this term, distinguishing it from acts of self-defence and the defence of one's land and property. However, the Syrian request did not receive the desired support at that time. Syria submitted the request a second time in 1991, reaffirming the importance of holding such a conference. Other States followed suit in 1999 and 2001, but all of these attempts failed on political grounds associated with selectivity and the use of double standards when it comes to questions of terrorism and the right of peoples to struggle against foreign occupation.

Chemical materials

24. The Syrian Arab Republic does not possess any chemical weapons, their means of delivery, or any related materials.

25. The Syrian Arab Republic offers no support to any entity whatsoever to carry out any of the activities relating to the subject of paragraph 24 above.

26. The Syrian Arab Republic does, however, possess chemical materials which are all used for peaceful industrial or agricultural purposes. Prior to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Syrian Arab Republic introduced a series of measures to regulate the handling of chemical and biological materials employed in various applications with a view to preventing them from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

27. The competent Syrian authorities have enacted national legislation on the sound management of chemical materials and have developed comprehensive national standards defining the maximum permitted concentration of chemical substances in the environment. They have also established a timetable for reducing the emission of chemical substances and hazardous wastes into the environment by the end of 2005. As early as 1994, a national centre was established to provide the necessary information on precautions to be taken when handling chemical and biological substances used in medicine, industry and agriculture.

28. The Syrian Arab Republic is a party to a number of the conventions on the management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, including:

- ***The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, which it signed on 11 October 1989 and ratified by Legislative Decree No. [number missing] of 28 May 1991. The Convention entered into force in the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 January 1992.***
- ***The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which the Syrian Arab Republic signed on 11 September 1998 and ratified on 13 July 2003 pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 35 of 13 July 2003.***

29. The Syrian Arab Republic completed a national chemical safety profile involving the adoption of a plan of action to improve the management of chemical materials in Syria by means of a number of measures, including the following:

- Adoption of a standard definition and classification of chemicals in common use in Syria (2003 and 2004);
- Establishment of a schedule of chemicals that are banned and restricted in Syria;
- Issuance, in early 2003, of a technical manual on sound management of chemical wastes;
- Preparation of inventory lists of hazardous wastes resulting from various activities (mid-2003 to 2006);
- Establishment of a national database on the management of chemical materials and of a network enabling the relevant organizations, to exchange data and information, among them.

Biological materials

30. **The Syrian Arab Republic does not possess any biological weapons, their means of delivery, or any related materials.**

31. **The Syrian Arab Republic offers no support to any entity whatsoever to carry out any of the activities relating to the subject of paragraph 30 above.**

32. **The Syrian Arab Republic does, however, possess biological materials, which are all used for peaceful industrial or agricultural purposes.** Prior to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Syrian Arab Republic introduced a series of measures to regulate the handling of biological materials used in various applications with a view to preventing them from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

33. The Syrian Arab Republic has signed the following international conventions on this subject:

- ***The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (The 1925 Geneva Protocol), which Syria signed on 17 December 1968;***

- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, which Syria signed in 1972;
- **The Convention on Biological Diversity, which Syria signed on 3 May 1993 and concerning which Legislative Decree No. 364 was issued on 10 December 1995. Syria ratified the Convention on 4 January 1996;**
- **The Statutes of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, which Syria ratified on 18 September 2001;**
- *The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which Syria signed on 15 February 2002;*
- **The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, which Syria ratified pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 46 of 13 August 2003; and**
- **The Cartagena Protocol on biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which Syria ratified on 29 December 2004 pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 9 of the same date.**

Small arms

34. **The Syrian Arab Republic applies Legislative Decree No. 51 of 2001 which contains domestic rules and regulations on dealing with all types of small arms (military revolvers, hunting rifles, firecrackers and fireworks), including the manufacture, possession, carrying, import, export, licensing, illegal trafficking, repair, maintenance, transport and use, etc. of small arms.**

35. **The Syrian Arab Republic imposes harsh penalties on anyone, including non-State actors, who breaches the provisions of Legislative Decree No. 51 of 2001. These penalties range from a term of imprisonment to a monetary fine, the duration or amount of which is determined in accordance with national regulations and the rules laid down in local legislation.**

36. **Article 22 of the implementing regulations for Act No. 51 of 2001 (Decision No. 373 of 2001) prohibits the manufacture, import, possession, or transport of firecrackers, and the chemicals used to manufacture them, where the chemicals are intended for use in the manufacture of firecrackers.**

Mobilization of the international community

37. **The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the international community to shun selective policies and the use of double standards on matters relating to terrorism and the right of peoples to struggle against foreign occupation and to take an interest in the legitimate concerns and growing apprehension of the peoples of the region vis-à-vis Israeli nuclear-military capacity that hinders regional and international peace and security and undermines the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.**

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: English]

***Requested tables concerning the first national report of the
Syrian Arab Republic dated 14 October 2004 pursuant to
Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)***

based on the Security Council Committee letter No. S/AC.44/2005/DDA/OC.8
dated 15 June 2005

October 2005